

## **BOARD GAME**

### **BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

5           The present invention relates generally to games and more particularly to games that combine chance and strategy.

Games provide an important source of education and entertainment for children and adults. Among other things, games educate children and adults in strategy, logic, and spatial relationships.

10           One known game has stackable playing pieces that each player is assigned. The playing pieces are placed individually on a playing field in a random arrangement. During the course of the game, the players stack the playing pieces on one another forming them into towers. Players can move the playing pieces from one tower to another tower or divide larger towers into smaller towers. The players conduct these  
15 game actions at any time they choose without adhering to any turn order. Without an orderly turn, however, players are not afforded the opportunity to strategize about which playing piece to play or even where to move the playing piece. A player also is not able to strategize about which playing piece an opponent will use to stop him because all the players can see each other's playing pieces.

20           Similarly, another known game has two forms of playing pieces in storage that each player is assigned. During the course of the game, the players choose playing pieces to put into play. The playing pieces will either take up a defensive position or attack an opponent's defensive piece already in play. The game ends when all pieces are removed from storage and placed on the playing field. Players may make plays at  
25 any time they choose. Like the game described in the preceeding paragraph, this game

does not afford its players the opportunity to strategize about which playing piece to play, where to move the playing piece, or even which playing piece an opponent will use. Instead, all the players can see each other's playing pieces, which makes the game unchallenging and tiresome to play.

5           What is needed is a game that not only teaches strategy, logic, and spatial relationships, but is also challenging, rewarding and fun to play.

          The present invention provides a novel board game in which two opposing playing pieces battle each other using weapons. The piece that loses the battle is eliminated and removed from the playing surface, but its unused weapons remain on  
10   the playing surface. An opposing playing piece or another playing piece on the same team as the eliminated playing piece can then attempt to retrieve and use the weapons of the eliminated playing piece.

          In one form thereof, the present invention provides a game with rules of game play and a playing field defining playing spaces. Each player chooses the playing  
15   pieces and one or more weapons for each playing piece in accordance with the rules of game play. The playing pieces are arranged on the playing spaces of the playing field. One of the players moves an attacking playing piece according to the rules of game play and uses one or more weapons to battle a playing piece of an opponent. The opponent playing piece will also use one or more weapons to battle the attacking  
20   playing piece. Either the opponent playing piece or the attacking playing piece will lose, however the losing playing piece is removed from the playing field. The unused weapons of the losing playing piece remain on the playing field.

          Preferably, a playing piece remaining on the playing field collects the unused weapons of the losing playing piece.

In a preferred form, the weapons used by each playing piece during battle will be removed from the playing field. In another preferred form, each player chooses one or more abilities for each playing piece however the abilities of each playing piece cannot be used up or removed from the playing field.

5 In another form thereof, the present invention provides a novel method of playing a game with two or more players. In this inventive method, rules of the game and a playing field with a plurality of playing spaces are provided. Also, provided for each player is a plurality of playing pieces wherein each playing piece has one or more weapons that the players have chosen. One of the players executes a turn by moving  
10 one of his playing pieces one space on the playing field and playing one weapon against an opposing playing piece in accordance with the rules of the game. The opposing playing piece plays one weapon against the player executing his turn. One of these playing pieces is eliminated and removed from the playing field in accordance with the rules of the game thereby leaving the remainder of the unused weapons of the  
15 eliminated playing piece on the playing field.

Preferably, any playing piece remaining on the playing field can retrieve the remainder of the unused weapons of the eliminated playing piece on the playing field. The playing piece retrieving the unused weapons plays the unused weapons in accordance with the rules of the game.

20 Advantageously, the present invention provides an educational and entertaining means for children and adults to learn strategy and logic.

## **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

The above-mentioned and other advantages of the present invention, and the manner of obtaining them, will become more apparent and the invention itself will be better understood by reference to the following description of the embodiments of the invention taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a senjutsu board game in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of foot soldier playing pieces and bases;

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of foot soldier playing pieces, an officer playing piece, bases, and weapon holders;

Fig. 4 is a perspective view of foot soldier playing pieces with bases and weapon holders;

Fig. 5 is a perspective view of the weapon holders with decals;

Fig. 5a is a top view of the weapon holder;

Fig. 5b is a bottom view of the weapon holder;

Fig. 6 is a perspective view of foot soldier playing pieces, an officer playing piece, bases, and weapon holders;

Fig. 7 is a perspective view of a foot soldier playing piece, a base, and weapon holders;

Fig. 8 is a perspective view of a foot soldier playing piece, a base, and weapon holders;

Fig. 9 is a top view of a playing piece;

Fig. 10 a perspective view of a foot soldier playing piece.

Fig. 11 is a perspective view of the weapon holder with a sword;

Fig. 12 is a top view of the playing surface showing a direction of movement for Fig. 11;

Fig. 13 is a perspective view of the weapon holder with a spear;

Fig. 14 is a top view of the playing surface showing a direction of movement for  
5 the spear;

Fig. 15 is a top view of the playing surface showing a line of sight;

Fig. 16 is a perspective view of the weapon holder with a bow and arrow;

Fig. 17 is a top view of the playing surface showing a direction of movement for  
the bow and arrow;

10 Fig. 18 is a perspective view of the weapon holder with an armor;

Fig. 19 is a top view of a clash card;

Fig. 20 is a top view of a double hit card;

Fig. 21 is a top view of an influence card;

Fig. 22 is a top view of a maneuver card;

15 Fig. 23 is a top view of a strong armor card;

Fig. 24 is a top view of a morale card;

Fig. 25 is a top view of a ninja attack card;

Fig. 26 is a top view of a ninja spy card;

Fig. 27 is a top view of a reinforcements card;

20 Fig. 28 is a top view of a retreat card;

Fig. 29 is a top view of a stealth card; and

Fig. 30 is a top view of a game.

Corresponding reference characters indicate corresponding parts throughout the  
several views.

## **DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

The embodiments of the present invention described below are not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the invention to the precise forms disclosed in the following detailed description. Rather, the embodiments are chosen and described so that others  
5 skilled in the art may appreciate and understand the principles and practices of the present invention.

The senjutsu board game (also referred to herein as “game”) in accordance with the illustrated embodiment of the present invention includes a playing surface with playing spaces, rules of game play, playing pieces attached to bases, and weapons  
10 attached to weapon holders. The novel rules of game play include rules that allow an attacking player to take a turn and move his playing piece, base, weapons and weapon holders one playing space. The rules of game play also allow an attacking player to use a weapon to attack a playing piece of an opponent. The opponent uses a weapon, if  
15 available, to defend against the attacking player. Either the attacking player or the opponent player will lose and the losing playing piece is removed from the playing field. Any unused weapons from the losing playing piece will remain on the playing surface. On any succeeding turn, any player can retrieve the unused weapons and use those weapons as his own.

Turning to Fig. 1, game 20 includes a rectangular board or playing surface 22  
20 with playing spaces 24. As shown in Fig. 2, a foot soldier playing piece 26 is attached to a base 28. In Fig. 3, an officer playing piece 30 is attached to a base 28. As shown in Fig. 4, the base 28 stacks onto a weapon holder 32. The weapon holder 32 is capable of stacking onto other weapon holders 32. Game 20 also includes cards 34 (Fig. 1) for each player.

Referring to Fig. 1, the playing surface 22 includes playing spaces 24, forest playing spaces 36, and castle playing spaces 38. In the illustrated embodiment, the playing surface 22 is a board for playing a game. However, in other embodiments the playing surface 22 may be part of another object such as a table, a support surface, or a floor. For example, in miniature games a player moves the foot soldier playing piece 26 or the officer playing piece 30 on the playing surface 22 by measuring a distance specified by rules of the game instead of playing or counting playing spaces 24 on a playing surface such as surface 22. The playing surface 22 is rectangular in shape, although it should be appreciated that in other embodiments the playing surface 22 may be a different shape such as circular, trapezoidal, or elliptical, to name a few. In another embodiment, the playing surface 22 may have obstacles or protrusions such as hills, trees, or buildings, to name a few, around which the playing pieces 26 and 30 must move.

Turning to Fig. 10, the foot soldier playing piece 26 comprises one or more legs 40 at one end and a warrior head 42 at an opposite end. The legs 40 extend opposite the warrior head 42 and the legs 40 attach into the base 28. In other forms, the legs 40 may be shaped differently to attach to the base 28 by screwing, twisting, or snugly fitting into the base 28. In the illustrated embodiment, the base 28 has an opening 44 to receive the legs 40 of the playing piece 26. The warrior head 42 may be a different shape to differentiate it from the foot soldier playing pieces 26. For example, the warrior head 42 may be shaped as a wizard, a soldier, or a super hero, to name a few. In another embodiment, the warrior head 42 may be shaped as an ornament, a figurine, a geometrical shape, such as a block, a triangle, or a circle, to name a few. The officer playing piece 30 is similar to the foot soldier playing piece 26 in that the officer playing

piece 30 includes one or more legs 40 at one end and an officer head 46 at an opposite end. In the illustrated embodiment, the officer head 46 is a different shape than the warrior head 42. In another form, the officer head 46 may be the same shape as the warrior head 42.

5           As shown in Figs. 5a and 5b, the weapon holder 32 includes an octagonally shaped raised platform 48 having nubs 50 extending from four sides thereof. Weapon holder 32 is also octagonally shaped, having walls 52 that form an octagonally shaped opening 54. The raised platform 48 has a raised ridge 56 with a slot 58 for receiving the legs 40. In the illustrated embodiment, the complimentary shaped platform 48 and  
10   opening 54 allow several weapon holders 32 to be stacked and removably attached to one another in a nesting relationship. Nubs 50 provide a friction fit between platform 48 and walls 52 of opening 54. The opening 54 is sized to receive the raised platform 48 of another weapon holder 32 or base 28. In the illustrated embodiment, the weapon holder 32 snaps in place with another weapon holder 32. In alternate embodiments, the  
15   weapon holders 32 can attach together by stacking on top of one another, screwing into one another, or pressing together, to name a few forms of attachment. The weapon holder 32 also has a pair of interior ribs 60 sized to receive the raised ridge 56 of another weapon holder 32. Further, it should be appreciated that in other embodiments, the raised platform 48 and the opening 54 formed from the walls 52 can be different  
20   shapes, such as but not limited to, rectangular, circular, or trapezoidal.

Referring to Fig. 5, a weapon or decal is placed on the wall 52 of the weapon holder 32. In the illustrated embodiment, the weapon is a sword 64, a spear 66, a bow and arrow 67, armor 68, a scroll 70, a ninja 72, or a counter attack 74. In an alternate embodiment, the weapon can be an item such as a wizard staff, a wizard spell, a form



of currency, a wizard potion, or a talisman, to name a few. In yet another embodiment, the weapon can be an ability such as a speed, a strength, or an ability to fly, to name a few. As shown in Fig. 5, the weapon is provided in the form of a decal that attaches to the wall 52 that is parallel to the raised ridge 56. Alternatively, the weapon could be  
5 molded into weapon holder 32, printed or etched or the like.

The foot soldier playing pieces 26 move forward, backward, left, or right, by one playing space 24 on the playing surface 22. The officer playing piece 30 can move forward, backward, left, right, or diagonal, by one playing space 24 on the playing surface 22. In an alternate embodiment, the foot soldier playing pieces 26 or the officer  
10 playing piece 30 can move in other manners such as, moving a defined measured distance or moving a selected random distance, to name a few. The foot soldier playing pieces 26 and the officer playing pieces 30 can jump either another foot soldier playing piece or another officer playing piece as shown in Fig. 9. The foot soldier playing pieces 26 jump forward, backward, left, or right. The officer playing pieces 30 jump  
15 forward, backward, left, right, or diagonal. One jump counts as one space of movement. The attacking player may move either the foot soldier playing piece 26 or the officer playing piece 30 onto the playing space 24 occupied by the opposing player to engage in hand-to-hand combat.

A player can use the sword (Fig. 11) to attack an opposing player occupying  
20 any of the surrounding playing spaces 24 marked with an "X" in Fig. 12. A player can use the spear 66 (Fig. 13) to attack an opposing player occupying any of the surrounding playing spaces 24 marked with an "X" in Fig. 14. Any intervening foot soldier playing piece 26 or officer playing piece 30 can block a line of sight of the spear 66; however, the weapon holders 32 do not block the line of sight of the spear 66. As

illustrated in Fig. 15, the playing piece marked with “2” blocks the line of sight of playing piece “1” in the direction of the playing piece “3”. A player can use the bow and arrow 67 (Fig. 16) to attack an opposing player occupying any of the surrounding playing spaces 24 covered by the arrows shown in Fig. 17. A player can use the armor 68 (Fig. 18) to defend against the sword 64, spear 66, and the bow and arrow 67. For example, if a player uses the sword 64 to attack an opposing player, then the opposing player uses the armor 68 to defend against and defeat the sword 64. The scroll 70 does not serve an offensive or defensive purpose. Instead, if an attacker captures his opponent’s scroll 70 by landing on it, then the attacker has won the game. The scroll 70 can be captured in hand-to-hand combat.

The opposing player can use the ninja 72 (Fig. 5) to eliminate the attacking player. The ninja 72 can only be used in two situations. First, the ninja 72 can be used if the foot soldier playing piece 26 or the officer playing piece 30 is stacked on the ninja 72 and no other weapon holders 32 are in the stack. Second, the ninja 72 can be used when additional weapon holders 32 are stacked with the ninja if the foot soldier playing piece 26 or officer playing piece 30 is not in the stack. In addition, the ninja 72 has no effect in hand-to-hand combat. The scroll 70 supersedes the ninja 72 if a player has grouped the scroll 70 and the ninja 72 in a single stack of weapon holders 32. The opposing player can use the counter attack 74 (Fig. 5) in hand to hand combat to defend against the attacking player’s piece. The attacking player can respond by playing his counter attack 74 and whichever player plays the last counter attack 74 is victorious. The victorious player takes possession of the remaining weapon holders 32 of the eliminated playing pieces 26 and 30. The sword 64, the spear 66, the bow and arrow

67, the armor 68, the ninja 72, and the counter attack 74 are placed in a discard pile after use.

An attacking player may draw one card 34 from his own card deck per turn if the attacking player has eliminated an opponent's playing piece during that turn.

- 5 However, the drawn card 34 cannot be played until that player's next turn. There is no limit to the number of cards 34 drawn into a player's hand. A player can try to increase his chances of winning a battle by using one of the cards 34 offensively or defensively. As shown in Figs. 19-29, the cards 34 have different descriptions thereby allowing players to strategize about which card 34 to play. In Fig. 19, a clash card 76 allows a
- 10 defending player to use the same weapon holder 32 as the attacking player to break or stop the attacking player. For example, if the attacking player uses the sword 64, then the defending player may play a clash card 76 against the sword 64 to stop the attacking player. In Fig. 20, a double hit card 78 allows the attacking player to count the weapon holder 32 as two and the defending player must have two armor 68 to survive. For
- 15 example, if the attacking player plays the double hit card 78 and the spear 66, then the spear 66 counts as two spears.

- In Fig. 21, an influence card 80 allows either player to move the opponent's foot soldier playing piece 26 or officer playing piece 30 one playing space 24. In Fig. 22, a maneuver card 82 allows the attacking player to move one foot soldier playing piece 26
- 20 or officer playing piece 30 two playing spaces 24; however, the attacking player must pick a different foot soldier playing piece 26 or officer playing piece 30 to attack. In Fig. 23, a strong armor card 84 allows the defending player to block an attacking player, but the defending player must have at least one armor 68. The defending player keeps the armor 68 and the attacking player discards his weapon used.

In Fig. 24, a morale card 86 allows either the attacking or the defending player to nullify the effect of any card 34 played by the opposing player. The attacking player can only play the morale card 86 after the opposing player plays any of the cards 34. In Fig. 25, a ninja attack card 88 allows any player to steal one of the opposing player's cards 34 out of his pile of cards 34. The stolen card may be played at any time. In Fig. 26, a ninja spy card 90 allows that player to look at the weapon holders 32 of either one foot soldier playing piece 26 or one officer playing piece 30 of the opposing player.

In Fig. 27, a reinforcement card 92 allows the attacking player to use another of his foot soldier playing piece 26 or officer playing piece 30 to attack the opponent's playing piece. However, the attacking player must have been unable to continue attacking the opponent's playing piece to use the reinforcement card 92. In Fig. 28, a retreat card 94 allows the defending player to retreat or move either the foot soldier playing piece 26 or the officer playing piece 30 one playing space 24. The attacking player discards any weapon used to attack the defending player. After the defending player moves one playing space 24, the attacking player continues with the rest of his turn.

In Fig. 29, a stealth card 96 allows the attacking player to move either one foot soldier playing piece 26 or officer playing piece 30 any distance in a single direction although the playing piece cannot jump other playing pieces or move through the forest playing space 36 or castle playing space 38. The foot soldier playing piece 26 or the officer playing piece 30 cannot change directions while moving and must end on an empty playing space 24. The moving playing piece may not acquire any weapons while moving. The moving playing piece cannot use the stealth card 96 if the moving playing piece has previously moved one playing space 24 in the same turn. During

game play, the attacking player may play one attacking card per turn, except the attacking player may play more than one morale card 86 per turn. The opposing player may play any number of defending cards. Any cards 34 played in a turn are placed in a card discard pile.

5           As depicted in Fig. 1, to play the game, each player chooses a team of foot soldier playing pieces 26 and officer playing pieces 30 and attaches the foot soldier playing pieces 26 and the officer playing pieces 30 onto the bases 28. Next, each player takes a set of cards 34 that match the team the player has chosen as shown in Figs. 19-29. Each player begins the game with weapons or decals and attaches one of  
10   the weapons to one of the weapon holders 32. Next, each player groups three weapon holders 32 in a stack for each foot soldier playing piece 26 and each officer playing piece 30. Each player arranges the foot soldier playing pieces 26 and officer playing pieces 30 with bases 28 and weapon holders 32 in two rows of playing spaces 24 closest to them on playing surface 22. In the illustrated embodiment, each row  
15   comprises seven playing spaces.

As shown in Fig. 1, the foot soldier playing pieces 26 and the officer playing pieces 30 move on the playing surface 22 by moving from one playing space 24 to another playing space 24. The forest playing spaces 36 are considered a “pass through” for the foot soldier playing pieces 26 and the officer playing pieces 30. This means that  
20   the attacking player with either the foot soldier playing pieces 26 or the officer playing pieces 30 sitting on the forest playing spaces 36 cannot play or use the weapon holders 32 attached to that piece. The opposing player cannot play the weapon holders 32 through the forest playing spaces 36 to reach the attacking player. The attacking player cannot end a turn with either the foot soldier playing pieces 26 or the officer playing

pieces 30 on the forest playing space 36. The foot soldier playing piece 26 or the officer playing piece 30 cannot move on or over the castle playing spaces 38 which are considered an obstacle.

To begin the game, each player places his set of cards 34 in a deck and cuts the  
5 deck. Each player takes a card from the cut deck and the card with a higher number allows that player to go first. Each player then places his set of cards 34 in a deck for game play.

In step one, the attacking player chooses either one foot soldier playing piece 26 or officer playing piece 30. In step two, the attacking player may use any number of  
10 weapon holders 32 to attack and eliminate any number of opposing players. In step three, the attacking player must move the chosen playing piece one playing space 24 on the playing surface 22. In step four, the attacking player may use any number of weapon holders 32 to attack and eliminate any number of opposing players. In step  
15 five, the attacking player may move the chosen playing piece one playing space 24 on the playing surface 22.

In step six, the attacking player may use any number of weapon holders 32 to attack and eliminate any number of opposing players. Each time a player uses the weapon holder 32, that weapon holder 32 is discarded unless that weapon holder 32 is retrieved in step eight. In step seven, if at least one opposing playing piece was  
20 eliminated, then the attacking player may draw one card 34. Only one card 34 may be drawn per turn. However, the drawn card 34 cannot be played until the attacking player's next turn.

The opposing player may use any number of weapon holders 32 to fight against the attacking player until one of the players is eliminated. The eliminated player

removes his foot soldier playing piece 26 or officer playing piece 30 from the playing space 24. The weapon holders 32 that are used during the battle are removed from the playing space 24. The remaining weapon holders 32 of the eliminated playing piece that are not used during the battle remain on the playing space 24. Any player that  
5 moves either the foot soldier playing piece 26 or the officer playing piece 30 onto the playing space 24 with the remaining weapon holders 32 can retrieve the remaining weapon holders 32 during that turn or a subsequent turn. The player can use the retrieved weapon holders 32 during that turn or the player can wait until a following turn to use the retrieved weapon holders 32. However, that player cannot move the foot  
10 soldier playing piece 26 or the officer playing piece 30 and more than four weapon holders 32 to the next playing space 24. That player chooses which of the weapon holders 32 will remain on the playing space 24 before advancing to the next playing space 24.

In step eight, if the attacking player eliminated the officer playing piece 30 of an  
15 opponent, then the attacking player may randomly choose one discarded weapon holder 32 and add that discarded weapon holder 32 to any foot soldier playing piece 26 or officer playing piece 30 on the playing surface 22.

The game ends when a player either captures the opposing player's scroll 70 or eliminates all of the opposing player's pieces from the playing surface 22.

20 While a preferred embodiment incorporating the principles of the present invention has been disclosed hereinabove, the present invention is not limited to the disclosed embodiments. Instead, as noted above, this application is intended to cover any variations, uses, or adaptations of the invention using its general principles. Further, this application is intended to cover such departures from the present

disclosure as come within known or customary practice in the art to which this invention pertains and which fall within the limits of the appended claims.